REMARKS

Applicants request reconsideration and allowance of the present application in view of the remarks below.

Claims 24-37 and 29-40 are pending in the present application including independent claims 24, 25, and 40. Claim 24 was previously withdrawn from consideration.

In the Final Office Action, claims 25-35, 37, 39, and 40 continue to stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,899,752 (Sekioka et al.) in view of U.S. Patent 5,698,284 (Kubota et al.) and further in view of JP 07-073511A (Uematsu) and further in view of U.S. Patent 5,698,284 (Danelski). However, it is respectfully submitted that the cited references, either alone or in any proper combination, fail to teach or suggest certain limitations of the presently pending claims.

The presently pending claims require various limitations, including:

1) **applying a first composition** comprising a first oligomer comprising an energy-curable oligomer to the outer surface of the game card to produce a first layer, wherein after the application step a first layer comprising the first oligomer is on the outer surface of the game card, and wherein the first layer has an outer surface;

2) **applying a second composition** comprising a second oligomer comprising an energy-curable oligomer to the outer surface of the first layer to produce a second layer, wherein after the application step the second layer is on the outer surface of the first layer, and wherein the second layer has an outer surface;

3) **applying an ink** to the outer surface of the first layer, or the outer surface of the second layer, or to both, so as to form an image; and

4) **applying a third composition** comprising a third oligomer comprising an energy-curable oligomer to the outer surface of the second layer to produce a third layer, wherein after the application step the third layer is on the outer surface of the second layer.

As described in the present application, once the image ink has been applied to the outer surface of the first or second layer, a subsequent layer can be applied over the

image and can be in contact with the image as well as the outer surface of the first or second layer. Para. [0034].

By sharp contrast, none of the cited references teach or suggest forming an energy-curable oligomer layer having an outer surface *and* applying an ink to such outer surface, *and* applying another energy-curable oligomer layer over the outer surface. For instance, Sekioka et al. describes an ink composition that is formed, in part, with a curing resin composition. Col. 2, lines 61-65; Col. 8, lines 5-10. The Final Office Action describes that Sekioka et al. discloses a method in which a "UV curable ink resin composition" is applied to a plastic substrate and then another "UV curable resin" is applied to the ink. The UV curable ink resin layer differs from the presently pending claims, which require forming an energy-curable oligomer layer, and then applying an ink to the outer surface of such layer. Importantly, the ink composition of Sekioka et al. is not applied to the outer surface of an energy-curable oligamer layer, as required by the pending claims, but is instead applied directly to a plastic substrate. In other words, there is absolutely no teaching or suggestion in Sekioka et al. of an energy-curable oligamer layer being formed, after which an ink is applied to the surface of such layer, after which *another* energy-curable layer is formed and applied to the surface of such layer. Kubota et al., Uematsu, and Danelski fail to remedy this deficiency. As such, it is respectfully submitted that the pending claims patentably define over the cited references.

Indeed, even if the other references remedied the deficiencies of Sekioka et al. (which Applicants do not believe to be the case), Sekioka et al. teaches away from the limitations of the pending claims. As described in the previous response, the purpose of the protective film of Sekioka et al. is to *prevent* anything from concealing the ink composition underneath. Such a film teaches away from the presently pending claims in that the claims require applying an ink to an outer surface of the claimed first or second layer. The description of Sekioka et al. expressly teaches away from such a modification in that an ink composition is already present underneath the protective film and used to form a latent image. The description makes it clear that the protective film is designed to prevent obstructions from blocking the covered ink composition. As

such, it is respectfully submitted that the claims patentably define over Sekioka et al. in any proper combination.

For example, in the Final Office Action it was stated that because "Danielski teaches that game tickets or cards are generally provided with visible image by lithographically printing with UV curable ink...in addition to concealed images...it would have been obvious to one or ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have printed a visible image on a second layer." Page 11, July 29, 2009 Office Action. However, as stated above, Sekioka et al. teaches away from applying an ink to the outer surface of the product described therein. Furthermore, Danielski only describes printing onto a removable film to expose a concealed image. As described in Danielski, "[r]emoval of the film from the inked surface portion also removes the ink in one of the selected patterns to reveal a desired pattern of deinked outer surface and thereby render visible the previously concealed message." In other words, the ink is only present on the outer surface because the outer surface is removable to reveal a concealed message. Such a configuration is the complete opposite of the configuration described in Sekioka et al.

In response, the Final Office Action asserts that "it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have printed a visible image with UV curable ink on a second layer of three-layer protective film of Sekioka et al. in view of Kubota et al. such that the visible [image] would be protected with a protective film." Page 5, December 2, 2009 Final Office Action. However, it is respectfully submitted that none of the cited references teach or suggest applying an ink to the outer surface of an energy-curable oligomer layer, as required by the pending claims. As such, it is respectfully submitted that the presently pending claims patentably define over the cited references.

Claims 25-35 and 37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sekioka et al., in view of Kubota et al., further in view of U.S. Patent 6,472,026 (Maag et al.), further in view of Uematsu and further in view of U.S. Patent 5,282,917 (Danelski). However, for at least the reasons above, and because Maag et

al. fails to remedy the deficiencies noted above, it is respectfully submitted that the presently pending claims patentably define over the cited references.

Dependent claims 26-39 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over a variety of references. However, for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to independent claim 25, it is respectfully submitted that the presently pending dependent claims patentably define over the cited references, either alone or in any proper combination.

For instance, dependent claim 39 requires a water-based ink. As discussed above, Sekioka et al. plainly states that the protective film described therein "must be hard and tough, *water-resistant*, fouling resistant and scratch resistant, and capable of...permitting reliable discrimination of the latent image." Col. 8, lines 5-10 (emphasis added). As such, there can be no question that dependent claim 39 patentably defines over Sekioka et al. in any proper combination.

In summary, Applicants respectfully submit that the present claims patentably define over all of the prior art of record for at least the reasons set forth above. As such, it is believed that the present application is in complete condition for allowance and favorable action, therefore, is respectfully requested. Examiner Lightfoot is invited and encouraged to telephone the undersigned, however, should any issues remain after consideration of this Amendment.

Please charge any additional fees required by this Amendment to Deposit Account No. 04-1403.

Respectfully submitted,

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